

March 13, 2007



TRANSCRIPT

March 13, 2007

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

Councilmember Marilyn J. Praisner, President	Councilmember Knapp, Vice-President
Councilmember Nancy Floreen	Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg
Councilmember Phil Andrews	Councilmember George Leventhal
Councilmember Marc Elrich	Councilmember Valerie Ervin
Councilmember Roger Berliner	



March 13, 2007

Councilmember Trachtenberg,

Good morning. May we rise for a moment of silence, please. Thank you. Our first item of business is a presentation proclamation and recognition of March as Women's History Month by Councilmember Floreen. Nancy?

Councilmember Floreen,

Thank you, Madam President. If the Executive Director and President of the Commission could come on up -- Deborah Horan and Judith Vaughan-Prather -- and I do ask my colleagues, those of you who can join us --

Council President Praisner,

I have to go outside for an interview, but I'll be right back.

Unknown Female Speaker,

Oh, come on, join the ladies.

Councilmember Elrich,

Well.

Unknown Female Speaker,

Join the ladies.

Councilmember Floreen,

This is -- it's nice to bring you over on a pretty regular basis to celebrate Women's History Month. So we've done a little proclamation for you; and, as you know, this is a grand term. We have four women on the Council to join our male counterparts. This is a repeat of some years back, and always an important contribution is provided by --

Councilmember Andrews,

More women and fewer lawyers.

Councilmember Floreen,

That's right.

Councilmember Trachtenberg

Actually that's a good thing.

Councilmember Andrews,

That's okay. (Laughter)

Councilmember Floreen,

It has made some options here. In any event, we're very proud to recognize Women's History Month with this proclamation, and maybe Valerie and Duchy would like to join me in reading it. "Whereas women have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways..."

1 Councilmember Ervin,
2 I really can't read it because I don't have my glasses on.
3
4 Councilmember Floreen,
5 Okay. Duchy, do you want to –
6
7 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
8 I have my glasses. "Whereas Montgomery County women -- including Rachel Carson,
9 mother of the environmental movement; Clara Barton, founder of the American Red
10 Cross; and Emily Edmundson, freed slave and abolitionist -- figure importantly in our
11 local and national history...
12
13 Councilmember Floreen,
14 "And whereas women have been leaders in securing not only their own rights of
15 suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation
16 movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, and other
17 movements which have created a more fair and just society for all, and...
18
19 Councilmember Ervin,
20 And whereas despite these contributions, the role of women in history has been
21 underrepresented in the literature, teaching, and study of American history and ...
22
23 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
24 "Whereas the National Women's History Month Resolution was passed in 1987 by the
25 United States Senate and House of Representatives, and has been reaffirmed every
26 year since then...
27
28 Councilmember Floreen,
29 "Therefore, be it resolved that the County Council of Montgomery County, Maryland,
30 hereby recognizes March 2007 as Women's History Month in Montgomery County and
31 calls upon governmental officials, business and industry leaders, educators, and all
32 people of Montgomery County to observe this month with appropriate programs and
33 activities to honor the enormous contributions women have and continue to make.
34 Signed on the 13th day of March in the year 2007, our woman who's President, Marilyn
35 Praisner. So thank you very much; (Applause) and Deborah -- Deborah or Judith,
36 would you like to say something?
37
38 Deborah Horan,
39 Oh, just on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission for Women, we appreciate
40 your recognition of Women's History Month and appreciate all you've done to support
41 the women of Montgomery County. Thank you very much. (Applause)
42
43 Councilmember Floreen,
44 Thank you. We're very grateful to your efforts on behalf of women, and we will look at
45 the pending legislation to make sure that your independence is assured. Phil or Marc,
46 do you want to join in, in any way? Now, we used to have a photographer here; and

1 now I think we're investing in our own camera; but we will get there at some point in
2 time. Thank you very much for coming, Deborah. And you'll notice in our -- this is the
3 day of the new budget. You'll notice that we didn't spend money on framing.

4
5 Judith Vaughan-Prather,
6 Right.

7
8 Council Vice President Knapp,
9 Okay. Thank you, Ms. Floreen and Councilmembers. We now return back to general
10 business, Agenda and Calendar Changes. Ms. Lauer.

11
12 Linda Lauer,
13 Good morning. No changes –

14
15 Council Vice President Knapp,
16 No changes.

17
18 Linda Lauer,
19 but we did receive one petition this week, and it's from a group of residents requesting a
20 Zoning Text Amendment relating to development on the west side of Fenton Street
21 south of Wayne Avenue.

22
23 Council Vice President Knapp,
24 Great. Thank you very much. Moving to the consent calendar, do I have a motion?

25
26 Councilmember Floreen
27 So moved.

28
29 Councilmember Trachtenberg
30 Second.

31
32 Council Vice President Knapp,
33 The consent calendar is before us. I see no lights. All in favor of the consent calendar?
34 (Show of hands) It appears to be one -- I see the far end of the table. Mr. Elrich and Ms.
35 Erwin on the consent calendar? It is unanimous among those present. Thank you very
36 much. Turning to the Legislative Session. Madam Clerk, do we have a Legislative
37 Journal to approve?

38
39 Clerk
40 No.

41
42 Council Vice President Knapp,
43 No? Okay. Introduction of Bills. We have a Call of Bills for Final Reading: Expedited Bill
44 3-07, Planning Board - Salaries. At this point, I will turn to the Chair of the MFP
45 Committee to -- We're moving very quickly this morning.

1 Councilmember Trachtenberg
2 Yes, I can see that.
3
4 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
5 Bear with me. I apologize. As Council Vice President Knapp indicated –
6
7 Council President Praisner,
8 Your mike's not on.
9
10 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
11 We're here this morning to move forward a Bill on Planning Board Salaries; and, of
12 course, this was discussed in the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee by both
13 Councilmember Berliner and myself. The President was absent; and we recommended,
14 after some discussion, that we go ahead with the language that's been proposed
15 specifically to increase the Planning Board salaries --both for members and the Chair --
16 and basically, what we're asking is that the salary for members would be \$24,000, and I
17 guess the Chair would be \$30,000 if I'm correct.
18
19 Council President Praisner,
20 No, no, no, no. The whole thing is \$30,000.
21
22 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
23 No? The whole thing is \$30,000? Okay. That was where we had some discussion, and
24 we're recommending –
25
26 Councilmember Leventhal,
27 Could I -- just in case anyone is listening, the Planning Board Chair makes significantly
28 more than \$30,000.
29
30 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
31 Right. How much -- I don't know that. How much do they make?
32
33 Councilmember Leventhal,
34 He makes \$145,000 or something –
35
36 Council President Praisner,
37 \$155,000 -- something like that.
38
39 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
40 Okay. Okay. That's right. Excuse me.
41
42 Councilmember Leventhal,
43 He's the only one who's working full time at the job.
44
45
46

1 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
2 Right. And so the members are part time, and we're raising the salary to \$30,000; and
3 there was some discussion about whether or not that was adequate. And it was decided
4 that at this time, given some of our financial considerations -- the fiscal obligations that
5 we do have -- that the \$30,000 was probably the best that we could do at this time; and
6 it is with that in mind that I'm recommending, as Chair, that we go ahead and actually
7 support the \$30,000 as salary for Planning Board Members. And I would ask that the
8 body entertain approving the Bill as proposed by the Committee.

9
10 Council President Praisner,
11 The point that I would add -- I'm sorry that I wasn't there on the Committee. I obviously
12 support the Bill; I sponsored it. We will be appointing four new Planning Board members
13 to this Council; and this new salary applies not to the existing Planning Board members,
14 but to future Planning Board members. And the thought was, as I discussed with my
15 colleagues, the need to do this so it applies to the first appointments which we will make
16 this summer -- and that way would apply to all four of the new appointees. I see some
17 lights. Councilmember Floreen.

18
19 Councilmember Floreen,
20 Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to clarify again for the record that the salary
21 that we're looking at is \$24,400. There is a bi-County salary that is made available to
22 them that we don't actually fund. So I just wanted to make that clarification. So the rise
23 is from -- basically a \$5,000 rise from \$19,400. And just speaking as a former member of
24 that board, these dollars have increased only marginally over the years; and I think it is
25 a very wise commitment -- especially given the amount of time and attention that we
26 request of these so-called "volunteers" to put in to help us devise the right growth policy
27 initiatives and make the hard decisions in very contentious public hearings periodically.
28 So we owe them a significant debt of gratitude.

29
30 Council President Praisner,
31 Okay. I -- Mr. Elrich. I'm sorry. I didn't -- -

32
33 Councilmember Elrich,
34 I just want to say, I support this; but I also think that I'd like to see some continuing
35 thought and ideas to come out of the Planning Board itself as to whether or not these
36 positions -- we need to look at this as more of a full-time responsibility. I continue to be
37 vexed at the long list of master plans, of the delays between master plans, the
38 discussion about how much work it is feasible to expect them to do against how much, I
39 think all of us recognize, needs to be done. And I'm not sure that in a part-time way, that
40 we're really serving our interests as well as we might if we looked at this as more of a
41 full-time job. I don't mean to raise that for debate now, but I do think as we continue to
42 look at what Park and Planning's doing and their workload and our expectations, we
43 might want to think about that.

44
45 Council President Praisner,
46 Okay. I see no other lights; so, Madam Clerk, will you call the role, please.

1 Linda Lauer,
2 Ms. Ervin?
3
4 Councilmember Ervin,
5 Yes.
6
7 Linda Lauer,
8 Mr. Elrich?
9
10 Councilmember Elrich,
11 Yes.
12
13 Linda Lauer,
14 Ms. Floreen?
15
16 Councilmember Floreen,
17 Yes.
18
19 Linda Lauer,
20 Ms. Trachtenberg?
21
22 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
23 Yes.
24
25 Linda Lauer,
26 Mr. Leventhal?
27
28 Councilmember Leventhal,
29 Yes.
30
31 Linda Lauer,
32 Mr. Andrews?
33
34 Councilmember Andrews,
35 Yes.
36
37 Linda Lauer
38 Mr. Berliner?
39
40 Councilmember Berliner,
41 Yes.
42
43 Linda Lauer,
44 Mr. Knapp?
45
46

1 Council Vice President Knapp,
2 Yes.

3
4 Linda Lauer,
5 Ms. Praisner?

6
7 Council President Praisner,
8 Yes. The Bill passes 9-0. Before we move on to the Briefing from the Office of
9 Legislative Oversight, I just want to note for the clerk, please, that having stepped out to
10 talk to a reporter about the budget, I'd like to be recorded in favor of the Consent
11 Calendar; and also on the Consent Calendar, items 3B and 3C, I would like to put the
12 Departments of Homeland Security, the Police Department, and the Sheriff's Office on
13 notice that no future grants will be scheduled for consideration unless it includes a
14 priority list that identifies how the requests fit in their priorities for funding. We've
15 continued to ask for that, and I don't see the list here in a way that presents those
16 requests; so if they want them scheduled during my presidency, I want to see that list
17 incorporated in the future. Okay, with that in mind, we've already released this report
18 last year -- last week, not last year. Time goes by when you're having fun. This is an
19 opportunity for us now to get a more in-depth overview from our Office of Legislative
20 Oversight -- "in-depth overview" sounds like an oxymoron to me -- to have you present
21 what you learned during the base budget review of the Fire and Rescue Services,
22 Phase I.

23
24 Aron Trombka,
25 Phase I. Thank you, Council President Praisner, and good morning. I am Aron
26 Trombka, and with me today is Rich Romer from Office of Legislative Oversight. As we
27 open, we do need to thank Chief Car and MCFRS for their cooperation and assistance
28 we received throughout the study. We really asked them for a lot of information -- a lot
29 of lot of information -- and the Department each and every time proved extremely
30 forthcoming and responsive to all of our many requests. A reminder about the scope of
31 the project. In directing OLO to conduct this base budget review, you asked us to
32 produce the report in two phases. The first phase, which we're going to present today,
33 provides information about MCFRS work responsibilities and the allocation of operating
34 budget resources by major cost component. We hope that you will refer back to this
35 report as a resource document as you consider the MCFRS budget in April and May.
36 Then we get to Phase II of the base budget review, which will be a more detailed
37 analysis of one element of the MCFRS budget; and at the end of the presentation today,
38 we'll suggest four options for a Phase II study, and we'll also present to you the
39 recommendation of the Public Safety Committee.

40
41 Richard Romer,
42 Good morning. This slide presents an overview of our presentation. I'll go over the
43 organization of MCFRS and present data on incident response types and response
44 times. Aron will present a summary of budget and personnel information and data
45 management, and we'll wrap it up with OLO's and the Public Safety Committee's
46 recommendations for Council action. The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue

Service, a department of County government, is a public/private partnership that includes the Fire and Rescue Commission and the 19 local fire and rescue departments known as LFRDs. The slide shows the 34 fire and rescue stations. Both career and volunteer personnel staff fire and rescue stations in the County and perform field operations duties. The next slide shows the organizational structure of MCFRS. The Fire Chief serves as the Department Director and is empowered by the County code with authority over all fire, rescue, and emergency medical services in the County. The County code establishes the seven-member Fire and Rescue Commission to advise the Fire Chief, the County Executive, and the County Council on matters relating to fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. The Commission reviews and approves or disapproves Fire and Rescue Service policies and regulations proposed by the Chief. The responsibilities of the Department are carried out by five divisions: operations; administrative services; volunteer services; safety, wellness and training; and community risk-reduction services. Chapters 5 through 10 of our report detail the resources, activities, and responsibilities of each of these divisions. Today, we'll be focusing on operations, as it is by far the largest unit of MCFRS, comprising 76% of the budget and 86% of the total positions. MCFRS responded to over one hundred thousand incidents in FY06. In each of the past six years, emergency medical incidents accounted for more than two-thirds of all MCFRS responses. There are two categories of emergency medical incidents. A Basic Life Support response involves a nonlife threatening incident, such as a non-serious automobile accident or minor injury or illness. An Advanced Life Support response involves a life-threatening incident such as a trauma or cardiac arrest. Of the almost 72,000 emergency medical incidents MCFRS responded to in FY06, 58% were BLS calls and 42% were ALS calls. ALS responses have risen 29% over the last six years. In FY06, fire incidents accounted for 13%, and rescue incidents accounted for 4% of all responses. Most fire callers are for non-structure fires, such as an auto or brush fire. Structure fires represent about 1% in FY06 and have declined over the past six years. Response time is the amount of time that elapses between the receipt of an emergency 911 call and the arrival of personnel at the incident scene. The Master Plan establishes response time goals for different types of incidents. The response time goal for BLS incidents and structure fires is six minutes; and the response time for ALS incidents is eight minutes. Actual response times vary by incident type and location. The average FY06 response time was about 10 minutes for ALS time and BLS incidents, and 15 minutes for structure fires.

Aron Trombka,

We'll now highlight some of the budget and personnel data included in our report. In FY07, one year ago, the Council approved \$178 million for MCFRS -- a 16% increase over the previous year -- and this continues, as you see, a multi-year trend in funding growth. This slide shows the approved operating budgets for each of the past six years. As shown in the chart, the operating budget increased \$76 million, or about 75%, between FY02 and FY07. What are the major cost components of the MCFRS budget? This slide breaks down MCFRS personnel costs and operating expenses by division. Personnel costs are by far the largest component of the budget. In FY07, personnel costs accounted for 87% of the total approved operating budget. As with so many County agencies and departments, it's the cost of salaries and benefits for employees

1 that is the dominant component of MCFRS spending. Approximately three-fourths of the
2 MCFRS funding goes towards the Operation Division, the unit that includes the
3 personnel that provide frontline fire rescue and emergency medical services. As of
4 January 2007, the Department's personnel complement included 1,190 positions.
5 Uniform personnel comprise 91% of all MCFRS career positions. Volunteers also
6 provide frontline fire rescue and emergency medical services. The MCFRS staffing plan
7 assumes that volunteers fill the equivalent of 32 positions countywide during nights and
8 weekends. Now, the Department hopes to expand its workforce. The MCFRS Master
9 Plan recommends that the County increase staffing on engines, aerial units, and rescue
10 squads from three to four personnel. MCFRS estimates that the full implementation of
11 four-person staffing would require hiring an additional 200 new career firefighters over
12 the next six years, including the new positions -- I understand 36 new positions
13 recommended by Mr. Leggett in the budget he released today. One of the purposes of a
14 base budget review is to identify cost drivers, the factors that have the most impact on
15 the size and growth of an agency or department's budget. As you've seen, 87% of the
16 MCFRS budget consists of personnel costs. Rising personnel costs have driven the
17 recent increase in the MCFRS budget; but what has driven the growth in personnel
18 costs? Generally, there are two factors that cause movement in personnel costs: One, a
19 change in the number of personnel - the size of the workforce; and two, a change in the
20 per-employee compensation costs. OLO looked for data to indicate the relative
21 contribution of these two factors in the recent growth of the MCFRS budget. As you'll
22 see in the next slide, both the number of MCFRS positions and total personnel costs
23 have increased in recent years, but at notably different rates. Between FY02 and FY07,
24 the size of the workforce grew by 17%; over the same period, personnel costs grew by
25 83%. The different growth rates in workforce size as compared to personnel costs are a
26 result of the large increases in MCFRS personnel per-employee compensation that has
27 occurred in recent years. Clearly, increases in per-employee compensation have played
28 the most significant role in producing the growth in the budget over the past five years.
29 This slide shows budgeted personnel costs for FY07. In going through the MCFRS
30 budget, OLO found that actually expenditures for some personnel costs in recent years
31 have differed significantly from the budgeted levels. For example, since FY01, MCFRS
32 has budgeted about \$6 million each and every year for overtime, and that's what you'll
33 see the budget for FY07 was -- about \$6 million; but what we found was that in five of
34 the past six years, actual expenditures exceeded budgeted levels. And in FY05 and
35 FY06, actual overtime expenditures were more than double the budgeted amount. We
36 also found that budgeted lapse rates fell well below the Department's actual vacancy
37 rate. In addition, we found that for several years running, the MCFRS budget has
38 included several line items, known as either "salary adjustments" or "pay adjustments,"
39 which were over and above the funding for salary in budgets. What appears to have
40 happened to us is that the Department has used surplus funding from these
41 adjustments and from under budgeted lapse to cover the costs of unbudgeted overtime.
42 Other data management concerns also arose during our study. For example, the
43 approved budget and personnel complement for FY06 and FY07 -- and I understand,
44 also for FY08 that's emerging today -- still show expenditures and position data that
45 reflect the departmental structure that existed before the FY05 reorganization. MCFRS
46 had to manually resort data to produce the budget and personnel information that align

1 with the current organizational structure. We thank them for doing that; it was a lot of
2 work they had to do, and it helped us get our report done, but it shows the status of the
3 data management -- at least in terms of the budget load. Now, we do note that MCFRS
4 and the Chief have begun to address the Department's data management
5 shortcomings; nonetheless, in their current condition, we have found that many of the
6 data management systems are incapable of readily producing fundamental budget and
7 performance information. Now for our recommendations. First, OLO recommends that
8 the Council ask the CAO for an assessment of MCFRS data management systems and
9 practices. This review should identify the need for expenditure, personnel, and
10 performance data, and assess the gap between what is and what should be readily
11 available for ongoing fiscal management and program evaluation. OLO recommends
12 that the Council ask for a report back from the CAO within the next 90 days. In addition,
13 the Council should request that the CAO develop a 12-month plan for remedying -- for
14 improving the MCFRS data management practices. Please note that while the CAO
15 concurred with this recommendation, he suggests that the data assessment stage
16 would require 180 days to complete. The Public Safety Committee recommends that the
17 Committee ask for the data assessment and improvement plan, and requests that the
18 Executive report back to the Council by July 1st of this year. Our second
19 recommendation suggests possible topics for the Phase II analysis. We propose four
20 options for Phase II. Option one would be an analysis to compare budgeted versus
21 actual personnel costs in recent years. Option B would be a calculation of MCFRS net
22 annual work hours -- that's the average amount of hours per year a firefighter or rescuer
23 is actually available to respond for calls after adjusting for leave, training detail, light
24 duty, etc. Option C would be an analysis of the number of firefighters/rescuers that
25 would be needed to implement four-person staffing. And Option D would be an
26 examination of current and potential new fees for MCFRS services. The Public Safety
27 Committee considered these options and recommends option B for the Phase II of this
28 report -- the calculation of net annual work hours. The Public Safety Committee also
29 asked for additional data information, and those data requests and information requests
30 are listed on page 2 of the packet for today's agenda item. That concludes our
31 presentation. In closing, we do want to again acknowledge the tremendous cooperation
32 we received from Chief Carr and from all of MCFRS, as well as from OMB and the
33 Department of Finance.

34
35 Council President Praisner,
36 Thank you, I have several lights, and I'm sure more will come on. Council Committee
37 Chair Andrews.

38
39 Councilmember Andrews,
40 Thank you, Madam President; and thank you, Aron and Rich, for your good work on this
41 document. It's a good baseline for us; and this OLO base budget review is a good
42 example, I think, of how this type of work can give the Council important information it
43 needs as it considers proposals that come over from the Executive Branch, and gets us
44 thinking about what else we -- where we go from here. A couple of things stood out to
45 me in the report that just jumped right out. One was the chart that shows the difference
46 in new positions and in the personnel costs. That was the chart -- can you put that back

1 up? What it showed was that in the last five years, we've had a 17% increase in new
2 positions but an 83% increase in personnel costs. That is striking and it's unsustainable;
3 but it is what it is, and it's important for us to have that before us and recognize that it
4 didn't just happen. It's a result of negotiated agreements that were approved by the
5 County Executive and the County Council that have built in some very big costs. I think
6 you had a breakout in the report, if not in the presentation, on the components that are
7 salary versus healthcare versus retirement. That's actually not the one I'm looking for,
8 but the bottom line is that the increases in healthcare and pension costs are much
9 larger than the salary increases as a total. The salary increases are significant; the
10 pension increases are huge. That is a result of the Council's approval of the agreement
11 with the career firefighters, which I did not support, which included a 20-year retirement
12 for career firefighters which allows firefighters now to retire in their late 30s or early 40s
13 at a time when they are most experienced and likely to be using the retiree health
14 benefits for many, many years. So we need to be very conscious of the long-term costs
15 of the agreements that we approve, and that is one of the results. I want to also focus
16 on the response times that were cataloged in the study because I think all of us are
17 concerned that we're seeing goals in response time that are not being met on more than
18 a few occasions. The average for the structural fire response time overall was 15
19 minutes. That's a little deceptive in that there are many responses that are much faster
20 than that. But the average response time for the medical calls was about 10 minutes,
21 and we have goals of achieving 8 minutes for Advanced Life Support 90% of the time in
22 urban areas and 6 minutes for Basic Life Support 90% of the time in urban areas; and
23 we're getting to that target about 60% of the time, which is less than we want to achieve.
24 So we need to think hard about how we can improve these response time results; and I
25 look forward to -- I know this is a concern of the Chief, and he's determined to find ways
26 to improve it as well -- but that is the crux of what the service provides, is timely
27 response time to emergencies to people in need; and there are the goals there that we
28 have set. They do vary somewhat for different parts of the County. As I said, the urban
29 area goal is -- we expect a higher achievement rate for the goal that we have in urban
30 areas because they are more compact, and the fire stations on average are closer to
31 where the calls originate from. In rural areas, we're not going to be as close to as many
32 of the people that are calling, so the response time is normally going to be a little bit
33 more. Those are the two things that stood out to me in the report; and the Committee is
34 recommending that in addition to the Department bringing its data base management
35 for financial tracking up to a level where it's working well, we want to have the Office of
36 Legislature Oversight figure out -- calculate with the Department what it takes to staff a
37 position 24/7, because when we know what the net annual work hours are -- what the
38 calculation is to staff a position 24/7, and for corrections it's about 4.5 people because
39 you have to factor in the time that people are unavailable to be in position whether it's
40 because of medical leave or vacation or training requirements or limited duty --
41 whatever -- then you get the true cost or the true number you need to figure out what it
42 takes to cover a position 24/7 which is, of course, what we need for almost all the
43 positions in the Fire Service. So the Committee is recommending that that be the focus
44 of Phase II of the OLO report, and that we also have the organization gather information
45 on response times, broken out by station, so we can see in more detail where we're
46 doing well and where we're not doing as well. The averages that are in the report are

1 that; they are averages, and they're not broken out by specific station. So that was also
2 an area that we wanted the office to focus on. Also, we wanted to find out how lapse
3 rates compare with budgeted lapse rates; and, more generally, we wanted to ask the
4 Office of Management and Budget to look at how departments across the spectrum in
5 the County government are using lapse. Lapse is that savings that occurs when you
6 don't have people in place -- hired in place for vacancies. A good rule of thumb normally
7 is that most large agencies will have a lapse rate of about 2%. They'll be 98% filled if
8 they're doing a good job of filling positions quickly. If your lapse rate is higher, you'll
9 have more savings and more money; and then the question is, What do you use that
10 money for? If you have a very low lapse rate assumed, you're probably not going to
11 spend all the money you're budgeted and be able to use it for other things; and it does
12 appear the Department was able to use some of the money from the higher lapse rate
13 than they had -- than was budgeted -- because they had a very low lapse rate assumed
14 to plug some of the overtime costs. Is that right?

15
16 Aron Trombka,
17 Yeah. We found that their budgeted lapse was about 1.2% of their budget, although the
18 average --

19
20 Councilmember Andrews,
21 Which is very -- that's very low.

22
23 Aron Trombka,
24 Right. And they a ran a vacancy rate very similar to the number you cited,
25 Councilmember Andrews, around 2.0%.

26
27 Councilmember Andrews,
28 Okay. In a large agency, that can be a significant amount of money -- hundreds of
29 thousands of dollars or it can be a million or two. I'm not sure what the calculation was,
30 but it was probably at least a million dollars -- maybe two. So lapse rates are important;
31 and how lapse money can then be used is good for us to know. Those are the
32 recommendations of the Public Safety Committee as to where we go from here. We
33 also wanted to have additional information about salary and benefit trends over recent
34 years. So those recommendations were listed on page 2 of the packet for today. One
35 other thing I wanted to note was that -- I think in part because this report focused on
36 budgetary issues in the Fire Service -- I think -- it did not get at some of the issues that -
37 - and there are many issues in the Fire Service -- but it doesn't really get at the role that
38 volunteers play in the Fire Service to the extent that a fuller study would, because it did
39 focus so much on where we're actually spending dollars and, obviously, we're spending
40 less on volunteers than on career personnel. So I think that one of the things that I want
41 to work with my colleagues on in the next year is to look at how we can strengthen our
42 volunteer component of the Fire and Rescue Service. This is a very difficult time, and
43 it's not simply now. It is getting increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteers.
44 People are busier, more two-income households than in the past, and many more
45 training requirements for Fire and Rescue personnel than in the past. So it takes
46 extraordinary commitment for people to go all the way through the training and become

1 certified and become ready to ride the equipment and have all the skills they need and
2 the knowledge they need; and I think we need to do better than we're doing. I want to
3 work with my colleagues, I want to work with the Fire Service, I want to work with the
4 community to come up with a comprehensive plan to look at what are the barriers that
5 we need to overcome to continue to have a strong and a growing Volunteer Service.
6 There are all kinds of good reasons I think why this is a good thing; but I think the
7 Volunteer Service is struggling right now, and we need to figure out what we can do and
8 what policies can be adopted to maximize the chance that we will be successful in
9 recruiting and retaining volunteers in our combination service, because they do play a
10 very critical role. They do save taxpayers a lot of money, and they help maintain strong
11 community ties to the service; and they are incredibly dedicated people, and there are
12 many others out there I believe who would help, would like to help if we can make it
13 both feasible for them and still meet all the necessary requirements that individuals who
14 volunteer in our Fire and Rescue Service need to meet in order to be able to provide the
15 service that is required under difficult conditions. So I put that out there because I want
16 to come up in the next six months or so -- six months to a year -- with a comprehensive
17 approach and study of that that we can implement in the next couple of years to
18 address that issue which was understandably not addressed in this report. And I thank
19 Aron and Rich -- Aron Trombka and Rich Romer -- for their good work. You've kept
20 OLO's streak going. And I encourage the Council to adopt the Public Safety
21 Committee's recommendations for follow up.

22
23 Council President Praisner,
24 Okay. Councilmember Floreen.

25
26 Councilmember Floreen,
27 Thank you, Madam President; and thanks to the staff for really a very thorough report
28 and an extraordinary effort on your part. I think it'll serve us very well. Probably more
29 importantly, though, thank you to the brave men and women of the Fire and Rescue
30 Service. Maybe what we need is some more public recognition of these folks and what
31 they give to our community, Phil; because it's certainly true, we could not go on without
32 them, and we need to know how valued and appreciated all the professional -- how
33 professional they are as members of a rescue service, whether they are official
34 employees or volunteers. All of them speak -- present a front that is a reassurance to
35 our residents and a commitment to everyone's core needs -- which is basic safety -- that
36 really is a gift to everyone; so I think that's a very important point, Phil --

37
38 Councilmember Andrews,
39 I think you're right.

40
41 Councilmember Floreen,
42 and I'm glad you made it.

1 Councilmember Andrews,

2 Thank you and I agree. We're very lucky to have so many terrific career and volunteer
3 members of our service. It is certainly one of the best of its kind, and we want to do
4 everything to keep it that way and to continue to strengthen it.

5
6 Councilmember Floreen,

7 One question. Aron, will your -- the data effort that you're recommending, will that take
8 care of sorting out the adjustments line on this where there's a certain lack of --

9
10 Aron Trombka,

11 Yeah. I would hope. What the adjustments lined are -- if you dig deep into the personnel
12 complement, you'll find lines labeled nothing more than the "salary adjustments,"
13 "miscellaneous personnel costs," "salary -- pay adjustments" -- and when looking at that
14 in total for this year, "this year" meaning FY07, came out to about \$10 million. About \$3
15 million of that we believe is attributable to pay differential for paramedics and others.
16 About \$7 million of it is really unspecified; and so what we think is happening -- the
17 same chart that's on here shows that the budget for overtime was \$6 million, and the
18 actual expenditure was about twice that in recent years. What we think is happening is
19 because of the imprecision in the budgeting, the additional surplus money in the
20 adjustments has been covering the costs for the under budgeting of overtime. It's my
21 hope -- and the intent of our recommendation, as you've mentioned, Councilmember
22 Floreen -- that the scrubbing not only of the data but of the data management, more
23 importantly, will get to more precise budgeting so that there really is greater accuracy in
24 trying to predict how much will be spent in any column in any year.

25
26 Councilmember Floreen,

27 I think that would be helpful. And the other question I had -- and I suppose it's more for
28 the Committee -- in the service I see basically, it's like 12% of the calls are "other"; and
29 of that, I gather that there are a variety of explanations for what that is. Certainly, I had
30 not fully appreciated that 71% of the service calls were emergency medical.

31
32 Aron Trombka,

33 Just to answer the "other," the other includes hazardous materials incidents,
34 malfunctioning or false alarms, service calls -- somebody -- "The cat's stuck in the tree"
35 type calls --

36
37 Councilmember Floreen,

38 Yeah, and --

39
40 Aron Trombka,

41 Right. The lockouts -- things like that -- those are all in the "other" category.

42
43 Councilmember Floreen,

44 -- and that's not an insignificant piece of the budget; and I would ask that the Committee
45 give some thought to working with the Commission on whether there are ways to
46 reduce that cost -- basically to the County residents.

1 Aron Trombka,

2 Okay. We will look at that. It is a significant number, especially given there are 100,000
3 calls -- responses -- that's 12,000 or so. Probably a significant number of false alarms I
4 would imagine.

5
6 Councilmember Floreen,

7 And I don't know the extent to which -- some of -- it's not clear the way it's categorized.
8 False alarms could be, "Oh, my gosh, I'm dying; no, actually, I'm having a bad reaction
9 to my dinner" kind of thing versus something that is just a communications error in
10 somebody's alarm system. I don't know, but it would seem to me that there might be a
11 way to recover some of those costs or at least discuss how we can minimize that 12
12 percent number.

13
14 Aron Trombka,

15 We will pursue that.

16
17 Councilmember Floreen,

18 Yeah. That'd be great. Thank you.

19
20 Aron Trombka,

21 Okay.

22
23 Council President Praisner,

24 Okay. Councilmember Elrich.

25
26 Councilmember Elrich,

27 First of all, thank you again for your report. I think it's very useful. I agree that there are
28 great data lapses and a lot of difficulty in acquiring the kind of information that we'd like
29 to acquire from a data perspective; but you have a lot of data here that I think is worth
30 thinking about. I want to comment first on the pay issue and the chart that was shown
31 before; but I agree that adding 17 percent of people and 83 percent personnel costs
32 looks dramatically different, but I think the public also needs to know what the wage
33 changes were. Because you could easily greatly increase personnel costs if you
34 realized that what you were paying was a very unfair or unrealistic wage, and you make
35 a decision to make a one-time adjustment to bring the compensation up to a more
36 reasonable level. Well, that's going to look like a very large adjustment; but it may be a
37 totally justified adjustment. So without knowing what wages were before the change and
38 what wages are after the change, it's hard to decide whether 83 percent is totally
39 unreasonable, or if it is unreasonable. I think that when we're presenting data like this to
40 the public, particularly regarding wages and benefits, people don't just need to know the
41 gross numbers; they need to know what the impact is. I would say the same thing about
42 retirement. What's a person retiring on after 20 years in the Fire Service? Would any of
43 us expect someone to live on a 20-year retirement? So I think there's sort of this notion -
44 - the popular notion of people somehow retiring after 20 years and going on permanent
45 vacation; and it's not clear to me that the retirement salary after 20 years of service is
46 going to send people on permanent vacations to Tahoe and around the world. I think

1 there's this public perception of what it means to say you're out in 20 years, and I think
2 we should try to let people know what it really means for the people who are doing the
3 job. So I think any datum we talk about -- about pay and benefits -- ought to also include
4 real numbers for what that means to the human beings who are doing the job. And I
5 think there's a lot of justification, to some extent, for early retirements in the public safety
6 field. This is job where you're asking people to put themselves at risk for 20 years; and
7 that carries a certain amount of stress that I think is different than other jobs carry. I
8 mean. I was a schoolteacher. I suspect that the level of stress I endured at the hands of
9 the small children was minor compared to what we're asking people to do when they go
10 out and put their lives on the line.

11
12 Council President Praisner,
13 (Laughter) Probably a matter of opinion.

14
15 Councilmember Elrich
16 At the end of the day, I had control.

17
18 Councilmember Elrich,
19 We're asking people to do something which I think is putting their lives in danger every
20 day; and I think that there needs to be some recognition of that -- that this just isn't any
21 job. Most jobs don't require this. So that's my comment on the wages and benefits.
22 Second, I'm a little concerned about non-emergency transport; and I continue to be
23 concerned about it when we look at these response times. We got an e-mail recently
24 from somebody asking about non-emergency transports to the station, and I've had
25 discussions about non-emergency transports regarding the Bethesda Chevy Chase
26 arrangement. It's hard for me to believe that every non-emergency transport comes at a
27 time when there's no emergency call. Life would have to be too perfect to be able to
28 schedule all of those calls around there being no emergencies. So I think we need to
29 analyze whether non-emergency transports -- extra services we're providing beyond the
30 basic services -- are interfering with our ability to meet some of these response times.
31 Maybe you can come back and show me that it has absolutely zero effect, but I doubt if
32 it has absolutely zero effect; and I think we need to know what that impact is because
33 maybe that's not a good thing for us to be doing in the light of the kind of response times
34 we're dealing with. And I guess that leads to my third comment which is about response
35 times in general. We have on average, it looks like about 35 fires a day -- about 32 that
36 are non-structural and about 3 per day that are structural -- and I'm concerned that, as
37 we discussed in the last Committee meeting, that we have a fire-based emergency
38 medical service. Yet 90% of our calls are on this other side of the service thing. Does it
39 make sense for future expansion to look only at, Are we going to provide -- does every
40 effort to address the medical side of this have to include a fire station with all the pieces
41 of equipment? Does it make sense for us to look at what's the best location for the
42 stations to deal with trying to knock down the response times and structure fires, and
43 then what's the best way to deal with providing emergency medical services? Does it
44 make sense to have more disbursed units -- not just the floaters that we've talked about,
45 but a more planned effort to disburse units around the County to get those responses
46 down for emergency medical without having to build a fire station every time? And I

1 understand that there's an expectation that those who ride and do the emergency
2 service -- medical service -- have an expectation for being on fire trucks. That was one
3 of the things that was raised; they want to be able to do that. Maybe the way to do that
4 is to just rotate people so that you would spend some time in a remote station and then
5 some time in a station with a fire truck, so you'd get both. But it seems to me that given
6 our budgets and given the kinds of problems we're facing, it doesn't make sense to
7 address this need in the most expensive way possible -- to provide more fire equip
8 ment possibly than we need. I don't know the right answer to that. I don't know if
9 we can knock down our fire response times without building more stations, but I think
10 we need to look at the best way to go forward from here; and, again, I can't believe that
11 the solution to dealing with the medical side of this equation requires a fire station at
12 every location. So those are things I think are for ongoing investigation, but I actually
13 think that needs to be sooner than later. The numbers we're adding four-person service
14 was about 200. The numbers per station -- every station we bring online -- is another 32
15 to 35, I think somebody said. So the five stations that we've got planned, plus the four-
16 person expansions, adds up to about 360 people. There are identified at least five more
17 fire stations that aren't in the current CIP that people think need to be built. Well, that's
18 another 160 people. You can see where this is going. I think we really need to look hard
19 -- is that the way we want to go? And so I think this requires an early look and a real
20 evaluation of what we're doing. Just because we are a fire-based emergency rescue
21 service, doesn't mean we shouldn't be willing to reevaluate that and come up with some
22 kind of hybrid if that best lets us meet the needs that this community has. So those are
23 my comments so far.

24
25 Council President Praisner,
26 Thank you. Council Vice President Knapp.

27
28 Council Vice President Knapp,
29 Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate the remarks of my colleagues so far. I will be
30 fairly brief. I thank OLO for the report. I think that the timing for this was very good. The
31 Council over the last four or five years made a significant investment in fire and rescue
32 services, which was required; but now the challenge of linking that with the
33 organizational changes, I think is the time to ask some of these questions and really see
34 how those investments are taking and can we track all those pieces. And the reality is
35 that there are some issues that have been clearly identified here that need to get
36 addressed. The one, as it relates to just the budgetary tracking piece, is one that I think
37 is significant not only for Fire and Rescue, but probably all of our departments in County
38 government. And I'm pleased that in the Executive's budget that he has identified
39 resources for an Enterprise Resource Planning System -- an ERP System -- which
40 sounds very arcane and not very sexy, but the reality is that what we have now is
41 amazingly antiquated, 20 to 30 years old -- so the ability for us to track numbers, the
42 ability for us to actually do forecasting and planning and to link all of our various
43 planning activities into one central place does not currently occur. So I think that what
44 we've seen here only speaks to the need for us to accelerate the implementation of that
45 basic infrastructure because until we can have the right resources in place to track all of
46 the pieces, it's going to be difficult for us to actually understand the effectiveness of our

1 investment in any of our activities. So I think that this report is one that will probably be
2 mirrored by any number of other reports in our other departments that we would need to
3 look at, and so I think points to the need for us to get that done sooner. As it relates to
4 response time, I agree completely that the numbers we see here are discouraging in
5 some respects. I think Mr. Andrews, the Chair of the Committee, pointed out correctly
6 that we have a kind of a unique situation -- that we're trying to address urban, suburban,
7 and rural situations all at the same time; and so an average number isn't necessarily an
8 adequate reflection of response time per se. You kind of need to look at in the zones;
9 and I think if we look at it specifically as it relates to individual departments will get us
10 some more information. I know the Chief is working on that. The challenge that we
11 have, and what I hope that this will allow us to do, though, is to really begin working with
12 MCFRS to understand what are the factors that really impact response time and how to
13 really hone in on those so we can figure out where to make our investment with MCFRS
14 to really make sure that what we're doing is going to, at the end of the day, yield a better
15 response time for our residents. Because as the Chair indicated, damn it, that really is
16 what we're looking to Fire and Rescue Service to do, which is to get to the emergency
17 as quickly as possible and to solve whatever problem is in front of them. That's what
18 they do well. We at least need to make sure they get there in a timely fashion to get it
19 done. As it relates to the volunteer piece that the Chair has outlined, I think that he is
20 correct; and I am pleased that with the agreement that was signed a couple of months
21 ago with County government, we have the first of its kind in the nation -- a model for
22 how we incorporate our volunteer resources as a partner in our Fire and Rescue
23 Service, and I think that that model is something we need to really build upon. We've
24 made significant increased investment in the last two years in the budget for recruitment
25 and retention, and we need to really understand how to do that better; but I think clearly
26 the commitment is there to do it, and I I think that as we look at the numbers that Mr.
27 Elrich has pointed out, if we're going to try and address four-person staffing and look at
28 our new stations, the role of the volunteer community and how that gets done needs to
29 be well articulated but well understood so we can understand where exactly that does or
30 doesn't plug in. I think that's going to be critical. And then as it relates to kind of the
31 responses to the EMS, I think it's important for us -- I think what Mr. Elrich indicated is
32 very important, that do we need to look at a bit of a paradigm shift and, in fact, we have
33 looked at that a little bit in the last budget where we funded two additional, what they
34 call "flex units" which gives the Chief -- the battalion chiefs -- the ability to deploy the
35 resources. There are two units that don't really sit in any particular place but can be
36 deployed to where the trends are on any given day and meet the needs that we have
37 out there in the community. The challenge that we have is to come up with resources to
38 potentially deploy some of those additional flex units; because as the Chief indicated to
39 us during our Public Safety Committee meeting, once you actually get one of the units
40 on the road, they never actually stop. It's just a matter of where they get deployed to
41 next. And I appreciate Mr. Elrich's comments because I think that what we often need in
42 County government is to think further outside the box than we tend to do. I think that the
43 Chief's idea to do the flex units and Mr. Elrich's idea to continue to look at that and
44 where do we deploy things differently is something we need to continue to explore. To
45 that end, one of the other challenges that we pointed to, in spite of what we've seen as
46 increased personnel costs, are there's a real difficulty in recruiting and retaining

1 paramedics for a variety of reasons; and that's going to be something that we're going
2 to have to really tackle because even if we do something differently, if we can't find the
3 resources to actually deploy to meet that demand, we're still going to be stuck. So that's
4 going to be something we're going to have to address. Even with our current salary and
5 benefit structure, there are a number of folks -- many folks from the Fire and Rescue
6 Service who will willingly opt out of being paramedics. And that's very difficult for not just
7 us in Montgomery County, but throughout the country -- for municipalities and
8 communities to recruit paramedics because of the rigors of that job. So we're going to
9 have to focus very clearly on how do we do that. I know the Chief has some ideas; but if
10 it was a simple solution, lots of places would already have figured it out. So part of it's
11 going to be money, part of it's going to be scheduling, part of it's going to be additional
12 resources; but it's going to be a complex problem for us to try and figure out. So it's not
13 just a matter of necessarily redeploying things, it's actually finding the bodies to ride
14 those units once we've redeployed them and thought differently about what the strategy
15 is. So I thank OLO very much for this because I think it points to a lot of issues that we
16 really need to address; and I think it gives us a good road map -- and not only for Fire
17 and Rescue, but hopefully we can take the same model and begin to look at some of
18 our other departments and begin to identify similar trends and things we need to focus
19 in on there as well. Thank you, Madam President.

20
21 Council President Praisner,
22 Councilmember Trachtenberg.

23
24 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
25 I want to start by thanking OLO again for an excellent report and also the Public Safety
26 Committee members who I know labored over the report and will continue to do so in
27 the months ahead. I have three points to make. One is to echo some of what
28 Councilmember Elrich said in relation to Table 4-5 specifically that spells out personnel
29 costs. I think many of you here know I have a recently-retired firefighter on my staff -- so
30 I claim bias first off by saying that -- but I also had a favorite uncle who served for 30
31 years in New York City's Fire Department. So I grew up knowing a lot about fire
32 equipment. And the first thing that I really want to talk about is personnel costs and the
33 fact that the increase, in my opinion, is very much a reflection of the need that we had to
34 come online with jurisdictions in terms of benefits -- salary and those benefits. And for
35 healthcare benefits, I think an important thing to remember -- and I know Mark on some
36 level pointed this out -- is that there is a great risk with this kind of service to a
37 community; but also, there's a real impact on general health. I spent a little time last
38 night searching public health literature to see what I could find out about the general
39 welfare and health of firefighters; and I confirmed something that I had already heard,
40 which is that longevity is impacted upon in a very grave way in that the average life
41 expectancy after retirement is anywhere from 7 to 12 years. It depends which study you
42 look at, whether it's stateside or international. So I think that those things have to be
43 considered when we talk about what is a fair package of benefits; and I want to put that
44 right out there on the table because I think it's an important thing to remember. The
45 second item that I wanted to talk a little bit about was the requirement of four-person
46 staffing on equipment; and it would appear from what I read and some of the

1 conversations that I've had in the last week or so, that this is a national standard and not
2 something that -- it should be viewed as such a high bar to meet. I recognize the
3 difficulty we have in having the funds to make it happen; but it is a standard, and I was
4 also told that it was actually written into the Master Plan which I thought was really sort
5 of interesting. I didn't know that. So again, I see this as something that we don't have a
6 choice on it; it has to be achieved. And in terms of response time and effectiveness,
7 there are clearly a lot of considerations to take into account around those performance
8 measures. I've got four questions that I wonder, in the months ahead, the Public Safety
9 Committee couldn't spend a little bit of time looking at. One would really be a question
10 that very much relates to what Council Vice President Knapp and Councilmember Elrich
11 talked about in terms of the paradigm shifting and really, Are we investing in the right
12 equipment? I mean, it's clear that we're using equipment a certain way, and maybe
13 that's something that we do have to look at and we have to change; but I also think the
14 other question that needs to really be pursued a little bit as well is really the use of
15 personnel -- and this I had some lengthy conversations with my staff around. I know that
16 there are issues around the use of overtime to address gaps, and I think that's
17 something that we've got to look at and clearly change the culture around; and I also
18 know that staff is floated to cover absenteeism and, again, that might be another thing
19 that we look at over time. And the fourth thing that I really want to raise is the issue
20 around scheduling; and if there are supervisors on site, which seems to be the case, the
21 need for uniformed staff to be handling scheduling. Maybe that's not appropriate. Maybe
22 with the presence of a supervisor, we don't need to be relying on uniformed staff to
23 actually be directing calls. I think that's something to explore. And finally, I'll just add the
24 issue of data collection, which is becoming very quickly one of my favorite topics as
25 Chair of the MFP Committee; and it would seem to me that we need to continue to
26 move the Fire Department in the right direction on that -- which is to continue to provide
27 the technology, but really the encouragement to use the data in the best way we can.
28 Again, this was a very helpful report. I think it's a wonderful framework by which to make
29 budget decisions, and I look forward to working with the Public Safety Committee on
30 some of those questions that I raised in my remarks. So thank you.

31
32 Council President Praisner,
33 Thank you. Councilmember Berliner.

34
35 Councilmember Berliner,
36 I'm obviously new to this entire subject matter, and so I appreciate all of it. It won't inhibit
37 me from opining.

38
39 Council President Praisner,
40 Opine away.

41
42 Councilmember Berliner,
43 But I will -- what I wanted to do was associate myself with the comments made by by
44 colleague, Councilmember Elrich, because I think it is clear that if we were starting this
45 system from scratch, there's no way we'd only have 160 paramedics in this system --
46 which is what I understand the number is. Is that approximately right? 160. So we have

1 something on the order of -- what? I don't know what the percentage -- what that breaks
2 down to be; but we have 70% of our calls relate to the expertise that paramedics have
3 to offer, and we have some tiny fraction of our personnel devoted to it. So it would seem
4 to me that our objective should be: If we were starting over, what would the system look
5 like? And that ought to be what drives us forward. And I know that we have an
6 incredible tradition in the Fire Service, an incredible culture in the Fire Service, and our
7 population is getting older; and my bet is that this number of 71% is going to increase
8 over time, not decrease over time. So it seems to me that we need more expertise, not
9 less. So I look forward to our Chairman's efforts with respect to this and working with
10 Chief Carr, who I understand appreciates this issue fully; but it seems to me that's the
11 fundamental challenge, is to align our resources with what the real need is. So I look
12 forward to the whole evolution of that because I think it's very important to the health
13 and safety of our community. Let me ask one question that goes to the smallest piece --
14 and I do so as a point of personal privilege living next to the Potomac River. I assume
15 that some portion of that rescue piece in fact relates to pulling people out of the
16 Potomac River. Is that a fair characterization?

17
18 Aron Trombka,

19 Yes. There's a swift water and a water rescue special operations team. We actually
20 have the number of responses; give me a second, and I can tell you how many --

21
22 Councilmember Berliner,

23 Thank you. I wasn't able to spot it, and I'm sure it is here.

24
25 Aron Trombka,

26 The operations chapter --

27
28 Councilmember Berliner,

29 And I guess my question to you -- the broader question -- is, Are we doing there what
30 our target is, or are we falling below? We're on target? That's good to know, because I
31 hear it almost every weekend; and I imagine I will continue to hear it as the months get
32 warmer and kayakers are out there and people are fishing and wading in that beautiful
33 stretch of river.

34
35 Aron Trombka,

36 On page 44 of the report -- it's just a short paragraph describing the water rescue team.
37 In FY06, they responded to 91 incidents. That's on the Potomac, but that's also during
38 flashfloods, heavy rains -- could be a pond incident.

39
40 Councilmember Berliner,

41 And our response time with respect to that? Do you have any data --

42
43 Fire Chief Tom Carr,

44 Because it's a remote location, we have two stations that are proximate to the railroad --

45
46 Council President Praisner,

1 Tom, why don't you come up to the table because no one can hear your answer except
2 for the people in this room, and I'm sure that there are folks along the water or who use
3 the water who would like to hear what our response time is on that issue.

4 Fire Chief Tom Carr,
5 The response time to –

6
7 Council President Praisner,
8 Tom Carr.

9
10 Fire Chief Tom Carr,
11 Tom Carr, Fire Chief.

12
13 Council President Praisner,
14 Good boy. (Laughter)

15
16 Fire Chief Tom Carr,
17 The response time to river calls is difficult to average as we do normal response time to
18 fire calls or EMS calls, because the remote locations is difficult access. Its status on the
19 scene -- they may be at the Great Falls, but the call may be -- in other words, they leave
20 their vehicles. What I will tell you though, the two stations that are proximate to the river,
21 both are fully equipped and fully staffed with river-trained personnel to -- do a
22 tremendous job -- and are among the best in the county -- volunteer and career
23 personnel. And I think, absent being on the river which we are during training, you can't
24 get any better than what we're doing now.

25
26 Councilmember Berliner,
27 I will say to you, Chief Carr, that that has certainly been my experience watching your
28 teams in action there from those two stations. I can't imagine anybody faulting the
29 efforts that are made. It is unfortunate that so many efforts are required. It is a
30 deceptively dangerous river. So I do appreciate the efforts that are made there. I had
31 one question that I asked my colleague; and if you're here, Chief, you could perhaps
32 explain this better. Obviously, when a call comes in on the ALS versus BLS, it seems to
33 me that the ALS is the more "time-sensitive" call, if you will. Do you know when a call
34 comes in whether it is an ALS versus a BLS kind of situation?

35
36 Fire Chief Tom Carr,
37 Yes. We have a sophisticated protocol called Emergency Medical Dispatch -- a national
38 protocol that we're required to utilize. That helps discern the nature of the call and the
39 types of resources that should be sent. That call processing time is factored into the
40 response time, by the way. So the numbers you see there include that time without
41 going through the algorithms to determine which resources should be best sent. And
42 also I want to emphasize the men and women who staff the Communications Center
43 stay on the phone with -- and you've heard many media tapes -- and really walk them
44 through. So when you enter the 911 system, help is there right then. It's not when the
45 fire truck pulls up in front of the house. We help walk people through life-saving
46 instructions on a regular basis.

1
2
3
4 Councilmember Berliner,

5 And as I appreciate it -- while it seems it's somewhat counterintuitive -- that we're slower
6 on that which is more critical, we are slower because the nature of the resources we
7 need to bring to bear are more complicated? Can you share with us your assessment of
8 that?
9

10 Fire Chief Tom Carr,

11 Actually, you hit the nail on the head in many ways. A lack of resources -- we have just
12 the bare minimum number of paramedics which requires significant hours of overtime
13 and holdovers required to allow the paramedics to stay on shift so we don't reduce our
14 capacity in the County. The volume of calls versus the small number of units -- hence,
15 Public Safety Committee's and the Council's support of the flex units, because that
16 increases our capacity which will ultimately bring down response times. Response time
17 now is going up because of the volume of calls; and it's only going up between 9:00
18 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. I've got the right capacity at night; I don't have the right capacity
19 during the middle of the day. And Mr. Elrich's comments about EMS stations, we have
20 Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, Wheaton Rescue Squad; and those do exactly
21 as he notes. I think he's on target, but the problem is fire response time is a struggle. So
22 we're not quite to the point where we can stop building fire stations. Upcounty is an
23 example. Response time in the Upcounty -- by the way, we're building four stations right
24 now -- or in the process of. We haven't dug any dirt yet -- but we're in the process of.
25 Response time is going up. The other factor there is call volume is going up as people
26 move into the Upcounty. It used to be more acceptable, as Mr. Andrews noted, that a
27 lower percentage of the time we would meet the response time goals in the Upcounty;
28 but as the number of people moving in increases, there's a struggle. And there are
29 many issues, and all of you have hit on the issues; and they're my struggles too. Data is
30 the very crux of all of it because I need to make data-driven decisions, and the access
31 to data is abysmal at best and a struggle at best as we've talked about over the last few
32 months. It's been for two years, I've been trying to get the budget lined up; and hopefully
33 for FY08, we'll be able to do that. I hope -- not sure. It's the systems. We need these
34 information systems to provide us the data to make decisions -- can't do that right now.
35

36 Council President Praisner,

37 Further comments, Councilmember Berliner? No? Committee Chair Andrews.
38

39 Councilmember Andrews,

40 Thank you. Well, thank you very much to all my colleagues for their questions and
41 comments. We'll take them back to the Public Safety Committee. There's clearly a lot of
42 interest in looking at whether there are ways to move from here and, given the structure
43 that we have, to best address the changes in the nature of the calls that we receive, the
44 growing number of medical calls, the challenges of serving areas of the County that are
45 growing fast in population as well. The Chief does a great job in balancing all of this,
46 and it's certainly an art and a science -- maybe more art at this point than you'd like

1 given the challenges in gathering the data; and the better data we have, the more
2 science you'll have to rely on. But judgment is always going to be a big part of this, and
3 the Chief has great judgment in balancing resources and moving equipment around to
4 fill temporary gaps. So we've got a lot to chew on here. We'll take it back, get responses
5 to the specific questions, and keep working with the Chief on how best to continue to
6 grow the service to meet the growing demands on it from our residents. Thank you.

7
8 Council President Praisner,

9 I just wanted to make a couple of comments on -- and let everybody else speak first.
10 We keep talking about the technology problems that we have of not being able to do the
11 analysis; but unless the program delivery departments are held accountable for the
12 problems with the existing technology and unless they come forward to say, "This is a
13 high priority because I can't make decisions without it," we're always going to get the
14 priority placed on program delivery rather than program analysis. So while I'm happy
15 that the Executive has put some money in this budget, it's not adequate; and waiting
16 until FY10 or -11 to have this system is not acceptable. I don't see how the Council and
17 the community -- and department heads for that matter -- can make the right decisions
18 about deployment or analysis -- \$9 million in "adjustment" as a category is not
19 acceptable either. That \$9 million is hiding or masking a whole host of things, and we
20 need to be able to analyze that. I couldn't agree more with my colleagues about the
21 question of, "Are we building the right kind of system for the kinds of responses and
22 needs that we have?" I think that's a culture change as well as a structural change, and
23 it may affect the four-person staffing plan question because that does not necessarily
24 incorporate this issue -- I think -- adequately; and so it is, I think, appropriate for us to
25 spend this next year more rigorously looking at that issue -- especially since I continue
26 to get complaints from the community, as Chief Carr knows, about "Why did so many
27 vehicles respond to this incident?" or "Why did this kind of vehicle respond to this
28 medical incident?" When we talk about vehicles not being able to maneuver streets and
29 the design, some of those questions are related to what kind of vehicle is responding. I
30 think we need to work more aggressively with our hospitals on the issue of EMS Center
31 type centers and the evolution of that issue. We also have to look at the role of dispatch
32 in all of this. I don't think we've adequately looked at that issue. And I know we've
33 focused significantly on the complexities of the CAD System and the sophistication of
34 the CAD system, and I know the challenges of folks who work in that area. I think the
35 two pressure points are EMS and CAD from a personnel perspective -- and that's a
36 culture issue too. Folks want to ride those fire trucks -- not necessarily deal in those
37 other two pressure point areas. So there's a lot here to look at. I also couldn't agree
38 more that we've got a microscope or a magnifying glass on fire, but we could have -- I
39 think -- the same kinds of results and problems surface from putting that same
40 microscope or magnifying glass on the Police Department or Health and Human
41 Services or Public Works and Transportation -- Corrections for that matter. Those are
42 the key big budget departments, and those are the ones that beg and cry out for our
43 looking at this issue across the board. So thank you all very much. We're in recess until
44 1:30 when we have a public hearing. Council members are invited to join our Retired
45 Employees Association at 12:30 down on the third floor. This afternoon, Councilmember

- 1 Floreen and I will not be present for the public hearing, but I know the Vice President
- 2 will take care of that. We have Council business elsewhere. Thank you.
- 3 Absent any objections, and I didn't hear any, we're moving forward.

TRANSCRIPT
March 13, 2007

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

Councilmember Knapp
Councilmember Leventhal

Councilmember Andrews

1 Councilmember Knapp,
2 Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. This is a Public Hearing on a Resolution to
3 designate the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and
4 Families as the County's Local Management Board for Children, Youth and Families.
5 Action is tentatively scheduled for March 20th, 2007. Additional material for the
6 Council's consideration should be submitted by the close of business Wednesday,
7 March 14, 2007. Before beginning your presentation, please state your name clearly for
8 the record. We have three speakers. Kate Garvey, Carol Garvey and Debbie Van Brunt
9 and Patricia Mosby.

10
11 Kate Garvey,
12 Good afternoon. I'm Kate Garvey. I am Kate Garvey, I'll say that a couple more times.
13 I'm the Chief of Children, Youth and Family Services for the Montgomery County
14 Department of Health and Human Services and I'm pleased to represent the County
15 Executive, Ike Leggett, today. We're here in full support of the Collaboration Council's
16 redesignation as the Local Management Board. Excuse me. Over the last three years
17 the Collaboration Council has made enormous progress in providing appropriate
18 oversight to the direct service programs it funds as well as providing critical data
19 analysis and other support for key countywide initiatives. These initiatives have a
20 significant impact on services to children, youth, and families. I chair the Child Wellbeing
21 Committee which is a standing committee of the Board which provides oversight of
22 three very active workgroups. Excuse me. Those workgroups are early childhood, youth
23 development, and children with intensive needs. In each area, community advocates,
24 providers, parents and others come together to provide oversight to program
25 performance and to other activities. Since employees of nonprofit service providers are
26 prohibited from serving on the Board, the input in these activities are critical. We get the
27 expertise of the nonprofit community through this mechanism. These workgroups allow
28 the Collaboration Council to have parents, youth, and any other interested individual to
29 have input on the decisions of the Board of Directors and this is a critical element. In
30 2006, the workgroup members provided invaluable input to the Collaboration Council's
31 five year strategic plan. Using the results based accountability framework in each area,
32 the workgroups assessed community needs and analyzed community indicators. Once
33 the needs assessment were complete in each area, the workgroups developed
34 comprehensive strategies to help support the system of care for children, youth and
35 families throughout Montgomery County. Over the next five years, the Collaboration
36 Council will be working to make positive change in the following critical areas. In the
37 early childhood arena, we'll be focusing with all of our key partners on school readiness,
38 decreasing child abuse and neglect and increasing the child care supply and quality.
39 For youth development, there will be support for the efforts to reduce the achievement
40 gap in particular for Hispanic and African-American youth throughout our community.
41 We will also be looking to reduce the Department of Juvenile Services intakes and the
42 quality of the service that's provided. We will also be looking at reducing adolescent
43 birth rates. In the area of services focus on children with intensive needs, we will be
44 looking reduction of out of home placements and a decrease in substance abuse and
45 use. We will only be successful in these efforts with the assistance of parents, families,
46 the faith community, the business community, County and city agencies, service

1 providers, elected officials on all levels and many others who care about the children in
2 our community. For more information about the plan, you can look at the circles and I
3 think you've got about 3000 circles in this packet. My last portion is specifically I think
4 how the Collaboration Council is assisting me in my work. In my role as the Chief of
5 Children, Youth and Family Services, the data and the research elements that the
6 Collaboration Council provides has been extremely helpful. Some of the examples of
7 critical support that they have given us have been in expanding school based health
8 centers, in looking at the high school wellness center locations and data elements, also
9 in looking at gang activity. With the capability of the Collaboration Council to analyze
10 key indicators of child wellbeing, we're able to look at the geographic issues and able to
11 focus our resources. I just want to say that the Collaboration Council has progressed so
12 tremendously in the last three years. It's really a privilege to serve on the Board and it's
13 actually a critical tool within our community. I'm pleased to support it.

14
15 Councilmember Knapp,
16 Thank you very much. Carol Garvey

17
18 Carol Garvey,
19 Hello. Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Carol Garvey. I'm currently serving as Chair the
20 Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families. I'm very happy to be here on
21 behalf of the Board of Directors. We are requesting that you redesignate the
22 Collaboration Council as a Local Management Board for Children, Youth and Families
23 for Montgomery County. Over the last three years, the Collaboration Council has, as
24 Kate mentioned, made significant progress. There's been specifically on issues that the
25 County Council and the County Executive wanted improved in the function of the Local
26 Management Board when we converted from a County agency to a quasi governmental
27 private agency. When the elected officials decided to transition the Local Management
28 Board, they wanted improved functioning overall, and specifically, they wanted
29 efficiencies and procurement and diversification of funds. Again, if you look in your
30 packet, you'll see that the progress in governments has been dramatic with the adoption
31 of standard operating procedures and significant administrative achievements. These
32 achievements include efficiencies in procurement where we've gone from an average
33 time for the competitive bid process of seven months now down to three months.
34 Improvement in state monitoring findings over the last six years, findings by state
35 monitors have been reduced from 24 findings in 2000 to 0 findings in 2006. And we've
36 had unqualified audits for both of the fiscal years in which we've been in this capacity.
37 Over the last three years, we've also diversified our resource base as you'll see in the
38 pie charts in your package and we wish to more aggressively pursue additional funding
39 sources. Obviously we're still mostly governmental, and so we have engaged a fund
40 raising study to outline an appropriate approach for the Collaboration Council. We see
41 the diversification of our resource base as a key challenge and a key part of our work
42 over the next three years. I'm going to introduce Debbie Van Brunt who is the Vice-
43 Chair of the Collaboration Council and also a parent, and she will highlight our progress
44 in supporting the system of care for children with intensive needs.

45
46 Debbie Van Brunt,

1 And also always late. I'm going to change that. I'm so sorry I was late. Good afternoon
2 members of the County Council. My name is Debbie Van Brunt, and I'm Vice-Chair of
3 the Collaboration Council. I'm also the parent of two children with intensive needs, both
4 of who have been served by programs run by the Collaboration Council. In addition to
5 the administrative achievements, the Collaboration Council has made enormous
6 progress in supporting the system of care especially for children with severe emotional
7 disabilities. A key system improvement has been the function of the Local Coordinating
8 Council, the LCC. The Local Coordinating Council is a state mandated, interagency
9 body made up of all the child serving agencies and the Montgomery County Federation
10 of Family for Children's Mental Health. The LCC is a gate keeper to out of state
11 placements and to wraparound community based services. In each jurisdiction across
12 the state, the Local Management Board is charged with providing administrative support
13 to the LCC. Before the Collaboration Council was its own entity, separate and apart
14 from the agencies, the function of the LCC was not optimal. Since 2004, with the
15 leadership of the staff of the Collaboration Council as a neutral body. Wow. I get no
16 time.

17
18 Councilmember Knapp,
19 Go ahead. Finish up.
20

21 Debbie Van Brunt,
22 Okay. Sorry. I'll talk faster. Okay. This improvement has been also the result of
23 numerous resources the Collaboration Council has been able to pool. Both the County
24 investment in wraparound and the state wraparound resources from the Governor's
25 Office for Children and the Department of Juvenile Justice Services. So when families
26 with children with intensive needs come for help, the members of the LCC now have
27 options to direct resources to address a family's needs. Another major improvement in
28 the system of care for children with intensive needs is the acquisition of a high quality
29 care management entity to provide comprehensive care coordination and manage the
30 provider network for children with intensive needs. Maryland Choices Incorporated was
31 selected as a result of a request for proposal process 18 months ago. Maryland Choices
32 is now providing wraparound care coordination for families and expanding the provider
33 network for children with severe emotional disabilities. They are now serving over 170
34 children. Less than five of these children had to go into a residential treatment facility
35 and all of the children maintained in the community are attending school regularly. In the
36 future, our major short-term efforts will be in the area of youth development and in the
37 roll-out of Info Montgomery. As you know, the Collaboration Council issued a
38 comprehensive report on the status of out of school time in Montgomery County. On
39 March 20th, we are scheduled to brief members of the Council and the Board of
40 Education about the results of this study. We see the implementation of the
41 recommendations from that report as a major part of our work in the near future. In
42 terms of rolling out Info Montgomery, a comprehensive Health and Human Services
43 database that was built with the grant the Collaboration Council received from the
44 Governor's Office for Children, this web-based database will assist in information and
45 referral and will also give us a tool to conduct service gap analysis. Its development is a
46 collaborative effort among many organizations throughout the County. It is in the

1 process of being populated with service data and we anticipate going live later this
2 spring. In light of our past accomplishments and plans for the future, we urge you to fully
3 support the redesignation of the Collaboration Council as a Local Management Board
4 for Montgomery County.

5
6 Councilmember Knapp,
7 Thank you very much. Ms. Mosby.

8
9 Pat Mosby,

10 Good afternoon. I'm Pat Mosby, Board Vice-President of the Montgomery County
11 Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and a parent. I have three children,
12 two with serious mental health challenges. The Federation is a family run nonprofit
13 organization that addresses the need of families who have children with emotional,
14 behavioral, and mental health challenges. I am privileged to be here on behalf of
15 families who have children with those challenges and to request that you redesignate
16 the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families
17 Incorporate as the quasi public nonprofit organization that serves as the Local
18 Management Board for Children, Youth, and Families for Montgomery County. The
19 Federation has witnessed an incredible, you know, transformation in the services that
20 children and families are being accessed, the delivery mode and the monitoring and
21 evaluation of these services. And this is all due to the Collaboration Council's efforts. I
22 could give you statistics and show you pie charts and graphs, but what I really want
23 to tell you about is people. Families whose lives have been transformed because of the
24 Collaboration Council's efforts to partner with families and empower them to help
25 themselves and other families. The Collaboration Council has been instrumental in
26 transforming the service delivery system into a seamless family driven, culturally
27 competent and community based system of care. Families of children with intensive
28 needs are better off because of the Collaboration Council's outstanding work. Ten years
29 ago when I started my adventure with my children with mental health challenges, there
30 were no family to family peer support to give me support or information that I needed. I
31 really didn't know where to go, how to get the information or what I really needed. I just
32 wanted help for my children. Because of the commitment of the Collaboration Council to
33 children, youth, and families, now there are family navigators. They are family members
34 who have been through the system and can better understand what families have to go
35 through and what families need. Knowing that someone has been where you have to go
36 really helps and makes a difference. Knowing that they have made it, worked through
37 the paper work, sat through the appointments and have been to all the school meetings
38 really makes a difference. It makes you feel that you have a chance to help your child.
39 The Collaboration Council has listened and heard the family's voice and given the
40 families a choice in partnering with them so that a seamless approach to a system of
41 care for children, youth and families to get the information and services that they need.
42 There is a saying, and we've all heard it that it takes a village to raise a child. The
43 Collaboration Council has worked hard to be part of my village. It has brought
44 wraparound back to the children, youth and families of Montgomery County. There are
45 other programs that have failed youth with intensive needs, and I can tell you that
46 wraparound process has made a difference in my family life. You have testimony before

1 you, written testimony, and I hope that you will read it because we need the
2 Collaboration Council to continue. There are several different priority areas that they
3 have. I just want to say that because of the Collaboration Council, I always like to make
4 up models. And one of the ones that I made up is let all those that need be served and
5 because of the Collaboration Council, families in Montgomery County are being served.
6 Thank you very much.
7
8 Councilmember Knapp,
9 You very much. Thank you all for your testimony. We have a couple of questions. Mr.
10 Leventhal.
11
12 Councilmember Leventhal,
13 Ms. Mosby, you did a great job. Thanks for your testimony.
14
15 Pat Mosby,
16 I'm sorry, very nervous.
17
18 Councilmember Leventhal,
19 You did great. Very solid. I have a question for you but if you don't know the answer I'm
20 going to ask Kathy Lally to take it.
21
22 Pat Mosby,
23 Sure.
24
25 Councilmember Leventhal,
26 And that is this. You referred to family navigators and you referred to wraparound
27 services, are these funded by a pass through of money from the Collaboration Council
28 to the Federation of Families and is it therefore the Federation of Families that actually
29 in a hands on way provides those services with funds through the Collaboration
30 Council? Have I got that right?
31
32 Pat Mosby,
33 Yes.
34
35 Councilmember Leventhal,
36 Kathy's nodding her head yes. Okay.
37
38 Pat Mosby,
39 And the family support partners which are also with the family organization, are working
40 with the CME, which is Maryland Choices.
41
42 Councilmember Leventhal,
43 Okay.
44
45 Pat Mosby,
46 For the wraparound part, but

1
2 Kathy Lally,

3 Just to give you a bit more detail, we had to compete for additional resources maybe
4 eight months ago through an invitation to negotiate with the Governor's Office for
5 Children to create our local access mechanism. It was a way for us to improve access
6 to services and the way we crafted that local access mechanism was to create another
7 access point at the Collaboration Council and also to fund three family navigators. So
8 they are working in very close partnership and actually we just got feedback from the up
9 county supervisor for MCPS about how in just a month with having Michelle Shea on
10 our staff, better connecting with the PPWs in the up county area that the PPWs are just
11 thrilled to death that they have somebody to turn to and what Michelle is able to do is
12 temporary care coordination before we can get a family into wraparound or another
13 direct service. So it was a competitive process that we had to engage in in order to bring
14 those resources to get them to the Federation.

15
16 Councilmember Leventhal,

17 Okay. Well I appreciate that. It leads me to my second question and this has been a
18 little bit of a hobbyhorse for me. Carol Garvey, we've had a number of conversations
19 about the Tree House and where it is most appropriately housed and my suggestion
20 some years ago was that the Tree House ought not to be under the umbrella of the
21 Primary Care Coalition, that it ought perhaps be under the Collaboration Council and
22 the answer came back that the Collaboration Council doesn't run programs, that it's a
23 path through entity and a monitoring entity and a data collection entity. But that if it ran
24 the Tree House, that would be different than anything it's doing anywhere else. I do
25 understand that but again I would urge us to take another look at that. I continue to think
26 that, you know I understood there were short term issues with the reconfiguration of the
27 Tree House. That we didn't want to put it through a change in status at a time when it
28 was just getting its sea legs, it was getting staffed up, it was finding space that, you
29 know, dealing with its organizational structure was too much to take on at that time. I
30 continue to think that the Primary Care Coalition is the wrong location for that function
31 and still understanding the Collaboration Council sees its role differently, it continues to
32 seem to me that that is a more natural home. So I still feel that way and I would
33 continue to encourage advocates for these programs to keep this thought in mind
34 perhaps as we're looking ahead over the next three years as we do in this resolution,
35 maybe we could address the status of the Tree House in the coming years.

36
37 Kate Garvey,

38 We probably need to have a conversation in a different –
39

40 Councilmember Knapp,

41 Why don't you press your button. We probably need to have a conversation about it in
42 more detail in another venue but the whole management has evolved somewhat and –
43 with Primary Care Coalition is primarily as a kind of financial management entity, not an
44 administrative entity per se.

45
46 Councilmember Leventhal,

1 I do understand that but I also continue to think that we should streamline the Primary
2 Care Coalition and avoid – at the Primary Care Coalition and so I still feel the way I've
3 always felt, but I mean, I'm amenable to giving all of these good organizations the time
4 necessary to provide the service and you know, none of these things need to happen
5 tomorrow but I still think it's wise that Primary Care Coalition divests itself of that
6 somewhat digressive function. Even if all it is is, you know, a form 990. I mean it just,
7 it's, even if it's just an administrative convenience, it still creates some different
8 expectations within Primary Care Coalition and it still has a certain logic in my mind that
9 the Collaboration Council is a more natural place for that. So you know, we don't have
10 to resolve it tomorrow, but I still hold these views.

11
12 Councilmember Knapp
13 Certainly no less strongly.

14
15 Councilmember Knapp,
16 Good advocate. Mr. Andrews.

17
18 Councilmember Andrews,
19 Thank you. Well, thank you for all your hard work and collaboration. I don't have the
20 report in front of me that you had provided to us and I'm taking it that the goals that you
21 outlined Carol on page 2 are described in more detail in terms of the actual outcomes
22 you're looking for. You've got a listing here of what you want to do in partnership with
23 the other entities in terms of increasing school readiness and so on. And so I'm
24 assuming there are more measurable outcomes in the report. But the question I had is,
25 are we seeing an increase in the adolescent birth rate at this point? Births to
26 adolescents. Are we seeing a significant increase there?

27
28 Kate Garvey,
29 Yes. And of course – Yes, and I do not have the actual data but I understand that there
30 is an increase in teen births really across all ethnic groups.

31
32 Kathy Lally,
33 (MULTIPLE SPEAKERS) Data, but the –

34
35 Councilmember Knapp,
36 Introduce yourself first.

37
38 Kathy Lally,
39 Kathy Lally, Executive director of the Collaboration Council. We are taking a very hard
40 look at the adolescent pregnancy rate especially for Hispanics. It's going in the absolute
41 wrong direction.

42
43 Councilmember Leventhal,
44 Could we, that came up recently in conversation, could we ask either Kate or Kathy to
45 get the HHS Committee the hard data on that and I'd actually like to program a
46 conversation about that maybe jointly between HHS and ED. I think that –

1
2 Unidentified

3 That is a good idea. --be a good idea. Yeah.
4

5 Kathy Lally,

6 We are in the process of responding to another invitation to negotiate with the
7 Governor's Office for Children for early intervention and prevention services and we see
8 this as a big part of our work and we hope to really work closely with the Latino Health
9 Initiative to address it. We are looking at the Carrera Model and we had actual met
10 Michael Carrera about a year ago at a conference that Kate and I both went to in terms
11 of how he has organized efforts in New York City and in other metropolitan areas to
12 really make a difference in Latino girls getting pregnant. So, it's an enormous issue that
13 the data is indicating is going in the absolute wrong direction and in our document that
14 we're putting together, we're crafting that case and that we think the rate is increasing at
15 obviously a rate we don't want it to but that we're hopeful that we can make a
16 measurable difference over the short and long term if we can pull everybody together
17 and actually, and do something proactively.
18

19 Councilmember Andrews,

20 Yeah, Councilmember Ervin had mentioned a conversation here the other day that she
21 had heard of a significant increase, maybe seen it, I'm not sure, but a significant
22 increase in the number of pregnant girls at Einstein High School.
23

24 Kathy Lally,

25 Yeah.
26

27 Councilmember Andrews,

28 So, it does seem to be out there. I was wondering what the actual data was, but clearly
29 there's some kind of trend going on at least in the Latino community.
30

31 Kathy Lally,

32 Absolutely.
33

34 Kate Garvey,

35 The Latino community teen birth rate is about four times the white, non-Hispanic teen
36 birth rate.
37

38 Councilmember Andrews,

39 But you also indicated that all rates are --
40

41 Kate Garvey,

42 Yes.
43

44 Kathy Lally,

45 Right.
46

1 Kate Garvey,
2 Yes.
3
4 Councilmember Knapp
5 --among all ethnicities increasing. Interesting. Alright, that would be --
6
7 Pat Mosby,
8 Just as a -- --
9
10 Councilmember Andrews,
11 schedule that.
12
13 Pat Mosby,
14 -- from the family organization too, I just want to say that, not only is there an increase,
15 but there are less services for these youth and these adolescents. So, they're not
16 completing high school, they're not getting their GED which has a long term rippling
17 effect.
18
19 Councilmember Andrews,
20 Right. All kinds of long term social problems that are often a result from adolescents
21 giving birth. Okay.
22
23 Councilmember Knapp,
24 Shifting gears a little bit and we may, I've heard this before. I know that out there
25 somewhere in the offing is a report coming back to us on the various after school
26 programs. Tuesday. There you go. Alright. I'll just be quiet now then. Okay. Very simple.
27
28 Kathy Lally,
29 We're looking forward to that. We're bringing the folks back from the National Institute of
30 Out of School Time to talk with you and we're hoping to have a provider to illustrate,
31 from the provider's perspective, how difficult it is to implement after school when you are
32 a private provider in Montgomery County. And also to have youth there to dialogue with
33 you and you'll have an opportunity to hear what our findings are and also help us figure
34 out the solutions and we really see this as a major part of our work over the short and
35 long term.
36
37 Councilmember Knapp,
38 Great. Thank you very much. Look forward to seeing you next week. This concludes our
39 Public Hearing. Thank you.
40